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EU Statement
Intersessional meeting
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, 30 June – 2 July 2020

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina align themselves with this statement.

We welcome Sudan's Presidency of this important Convention and would like to commend you, Ambassador Mohammed, for taking the necessary arrangements for this intersessional meeting to take place in an as inclusive way as possible in the current exceptional circumstances. The current global pandemic context, and the resulting restrictions, compel us to be creative when setting up meetings, while fully respecting the principles of multilateralism and multilingualism.

It is of utmost importance that we continue our collective efforts in order to meet the obligations under the Convention; to achieve further progress in the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, the clearance of mine contaminated land, and assistance to mine victims. The intersessional meeting represents a key platform to share information on the progress made. In view of the global COVID-19 pandemic, we should also adapt our approaches to face the new challenges and provide support to increase resilience of the mine action sector to reach the shared objectives of the Convention.

Mr. President,

The EU would like to congratulate **Chile** on finalising its mine clearance obligations within the deadline under the Convention and becoming mine-free. Chile has not only secured safety for its own people and created conditions for further socio-economic development in its own country, but it has also sent out a clear signal in support of the global norm against anti-personnel mines, thereby contributing to the safety of people worldwide. This should serve as

* The Republic North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

an encouragement for other mine-affected countries to intensify their efforts to complete their time-bound obligations as soon as possible, and to the fullest extent possible by 2025, and bring us closer towards the fulfilment of our shared goal for a world free of anti-personnel mines.

The EU is very concerned about the recent use of anti-personnel mines, including of an improvised nature against civilians in **Libya**, as reported by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. The EU strongly condemns these acts, which violate the norm against anti-personnel mines and the rights of civilians who are protected under international humanitarian law. We welcome and reiterate the communication by the Convention's Presidency on this topic. The use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor is unacceptable to the European Union. We call for an immediate halt to the use of anti-personnel mines, whether industrially manufactured, or improvised, worldwide.

The Ottawa Convention, as reaffirmed by the 164 States Parties at the Fourth Review Conference, represents the global norm against anti-personnel mines, a norm that has saved thousands of lives and spared countless of children, who constitute the majority of mine victims. It must not be compromised. We urge all States that have not yet done so to join the Convention without delay, or as an interim step, to comply with the norms of the Convention. We call upon all non-States Parties, in particular major possessors of anti-personnel mines, to follow a self-declared policy of non-use, which will contribute to the universalization of the Ottawa Convention. In that regard, the EU calls upon the **United States** to re-examine its decision to re-authorize the use of anti-personnel mines by US military forces outside of the Korean Peninsula. The EU counts on the US to remain a partner and a top provider of anti-mine action assistance.

Mr. President,

The Convention's **Review Conference** held in Oslo last year was a success and an important milestone for the global ban on anti-personnel mines and achieving its ultimate goal. The EU welcomes the outcome of the Conference and supports the full implementation of its conclusions and action plan.

As a top provider of cooperation and assistance for mine action, the EU is supporting mine affected States Parties in their efforts to realise their commitments under the Convention and to implement the **Oslo Action Plan**. Between 2015 and 2018, the EU contributed EUR 321 million to mine action activities.

The EU strongly supports further efforts towards increasing ratio of **national reporting** as an indispensable element of transparency within the Convention. Another important aspect highlighted in the Oslo Action Plan is **national implementation measures**, as contained in Article 9 of the Convention. We urge all Parties to provide sufficient information, especially those State Parties which have not reported so far.

The EU has consistently integrated **gender aspects** in the provision of its mine action assistance. In line with the Oslo Action Plan, we are currently looking at how to further strengthen the consideration of the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities, including those related to gender and cultural background.

The EU is also supporting the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention to assist mine affected States Parties to set up **national dialogues** on mine clearance and victim assistance. In line with the Oslo Action Plan, these dialogues create a platform to strengthen coordination and dialogue with national and international stakeholders on progress, challenges and support for the implementation of the Convention. The ISU is also setting up regional stakeholder dialogues that facilitate the exploration of opportunities for bilateral and regional cooperation between affected States Parties, with a view to voluntary sharing of best practices and lessons learned. The Convention's Committees on mine clearance and victim assistance are involved in the selection of the beneficiary States Parties for this project.

The Convention can continue to count on the EU's commitment to defend and strengthen the norm against anti-personnel mines and to support the full implementation and universalisation of the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. President

**REUNION INTERSESIONAL DE LA CONVENCION PARA LA
PROHIBICIÓN DE LAS MINAS ANTIPERSONAL
GINEBRA (VIRTUAL), 30 DE JUNIO – 2 DE JULIO DE 2020**

Señor Presidente,

En primer lugar, me gustaría felicitarle y agradecerle su labor como Presidente de la Convención para la Prohibición de las Minas Antipersonal, un **instrumento clave en la arquitectura del desarme** y, por consiguiente, en las agendas globales de la seguridad y del desarrollo. Así lo pusimos de manifiesto sus Estados Parte en noviembre del año pasado en la IV Conferencia de Examen de la Convención y así lo plasmamos entonces en el Plan de Acción de Oslo.

Es para mí un honor felicitar a **Chile** por finalizar el cumplimiento de sus obligaciones derivadas del artículo 5 de la Convención. Y es también un orgullo saber que España ha participado en dicho objetivo a través de diversos programas e intercambios de información y conocimiento. Nos alegra mucho afirmar que el **Centro Internacional de Desminado** del Ministerio de Defensa de España ha contribuido a mejorar la seguridad y la prosperidad de la población chilena, al igual que hemos hecho en otras partes del mundo durante los últimos 18 años. Y espero que nuestra experiencia siga aportando ayuda a otros Estados en los próximos años para mejorar el bienestar de las poblaciones residentes en zonas afectadas por minas.

Nuestro compromiso con la Convención para la Prohibición de las Minas Antipersonal se revela cada vez más sólido. Creemos que esta Convención ha ganado una enorme influencia en la seguridad de las personas y ha adquirido una muy merecida reputación como modelo de cooperación internacional. Gracias a nuestro esfuerzo, el uso de minas interpersonal es condenado universalmente, aunque aún tenemos que denunciar su empleo en lamentables ocasiones, como es el caso de Libia.

Por eso, **España no comprende y lamenta profundamente el anuncio por parte del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos** sobre la posibilidad de volver a autorizar a sus tropas el uso y despliegue de minas

antipersonal. Esta decisión socava gravemente los valores y los principios que defendemos los Estados Parte a través de la Convención y supone un importante paso hacia atrás en los avances dados en las últimas décadas.

Los Estados Parte de la Convención debemos mostrar firmeza en el apoyo de nuestro principal objetivo, que es lograr un mundo libre de minas antipersona. Nuestro esfuerzo no puede decaer, y en este sentido, Sr. Presidente, le quiero agradecer a usted, a la Unidad de Apoyo a la Implementación y al GICHD sus esfuerzos para que estas reuniones intersesionales, a pesar del **actual contexto de pandemia** y restricciones de viajes y encuentros, puedan tener lugar de una manera inclusiva y acorde con el multilateralismo y el multilingüismo. Para hacerlo realidad, es necesario que mantengamos el esfuerzo financiero apoyando a la Convención. Por ello, animamos a aquellos Estados Parte que no lo han hecho aún a cumplir con sus obligaciones financieras a la mayor brevedad.

Esta reunión intersesional, la primera tras el **Plan de Acción de Oslo**, es clave para poder compartir la evolución y los progresos realizados en la implementación del mismo, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la destrucción de existencias, la asistencia a víctimas la transparencia, la perspectiva de género o las labores de desminado. Todos ellos son **ámbitos a los que España concede gran importancia** y en los que esperamos ver grandes avances en los próximos años.

Igualmente, Sr. Presidente, España le agradece sus esfuerzos y los de la Unidad de Apoyo a la Implementación para establecer un diálogo en el seno del Comité de Coordinación con el fin de **garantizar el multilingüismo en los trabajos de la Convención**. Quedo personalmente a su disposición para aunar esfuerzos en este sentido. Sin inclusión difícilmente se pueden lograr los objetivos del multilateralismo en general, y de esta Convención en particular.

Por último, Sr. Presidente, me gustaría reiterarle, una vez más, el **compromiso de España con la Convención de Ottawa** y con el Plan de Acción de Oslo. El compromiso de España con la Acción contra Minas viene de lejos, se ha prolongado durante décadas y esperamos poder reforzarlo en los próximos años, aún más si cabe. Por ello,

España se pone, una vez más, a disposición de la Convención y traslada a esta Reunión Intersesional nuestra disponibilidad para apoyar la Convención a través del Comité de Coordinación o allí donde más pueda ser de utilidad para alcanzar sus objetivos.

Muchas gracias.